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to say, that would either interest or instruct them on the present occasion; but he would make no apology for what he was going to say, more than this, that as he expected they would hear him pretty often, he would be brief;" and then he dashed along in his own easy manner, making some very good hits, which told upon the House, and he was, throughout, listened to with very great attention.—At his concluding observation, indeed, about "sitting from day to day," until a remedy for the distresses of the people was devised, there was a pretty general laugh; but what the Honourable Members found of the ludicrous in this observation, I had not the skill to discover. In sober sadness, the House—I speak of it merely as an assembly of public speakers, made but a very sorry appearance on Thursday evening. No thought was sent forth which bore upon it the light of genius,—no expression that seemed to aspire beyond the least ambitious mediocrity.

Your faithful correspondent,

I.

[This letter was intended for our last Number, but press of matter compelled us to defer it; the less reluctantly, that we thought it contained salt enough to keep a week without growing stale.]

#### ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Paris, 15th February.

The cold weather has again returned; the thermometer, which for several days had been as high as from five to nine degrees, is now again at zero. The accounts from the provinces, and from foreign countries, are very distressing, as to the effects produced by the intensity of the cold. At Berlin several persons have been frozen to death, as also at Stuttgart where the thermometer was on the 2d instant, at 25 degrees below zero. At Mulhausen, on the 3d instant, the cold was almost as severe as at Stuttgart, several persons were frozen to death; and in a house badly sheltered, a poor woman and two children were found frozen in their bed.

Considerable sensation has been excited here by the appearance of a pamphlet, on the celebrated violin player, Paganini; the general notice of this extraordinary musician, is very cleverly done, but the most important part of the pamphlet is that which contradicts the report of Paganini's having committed murder; this report had been for a long time fully believed; and yet it is worthy of remark, that it was current nearly two years, and occasioned great coldness towards Paganini without his being aware of its existence. In April, 1828, whilst he was giving concerts at Vienna, in the course of a criticism, highly flattering to the musician as to his talents, the writer expressed astonishment that such a man should labour under an imputation calculated to excite horror amongst his hearers; this, to Paganini, strange remark, induced him to enquire of the author what was meant, and he was then told that he was generally considered to have been guilty of poisoning his wife at Milan. Paganini instantly applied to the magistrates to institute an enquiry, which turned out completely satisfactorily; it was proved that Paganini had been the victim of a mistake. Whilst he was at Milan another violin player was really arrested for the murder of his wife, and a report having got abroad that a celebrated violin

player sojourning at Milan, had been guilty of this crime, the public unfortunately fixed it upon Paganini.\* M. Lafont, the first violin player to the King of France, has, in reference to this pamphlet, addressed a long letter to the French papers, contradicting a statement made in it, of his having been completely defeated by Paganini in a trial of skill at Milan; M. Lafont, however, speaks in the highest possible terms of the musical talent of his opponent.

The *Volur* contains a curious, I will not say a true account, of a strange freak of nature, which throws the Napoleon child, and even the Siamese boys into the back ground; it is stated, that as a gentleman was walking with his wife, who was in an advanced state of pregnancy, she observed on the outside of a gate, a large printed placard—*Joli appartement garni à louer*—the lady had a longing for this placard, and as her husband refused to steal it for her, a quarrel ensued, which very much affected the lady. On the birth of the child, which took place several years ago, some strange marks were perceptible on the body, which in the course of time became distinct, and were found to be the very words which were on the placard, viz. :—*Joli appartement garni à louer*.

Letters have been received from the Morea, dated January 2d, stating that the heat of the climate has been very destructive to the topographical brigade, which was sent out by the French government; only five persons survived, and they are said to be so debilitated as scarcely to value existence.

There is very little new in the theatrical world; the favourite Theatre for some time past, has been the Italian, which, however, is to close in little more than a month. At the *Académie Royale*, the celebrated dancer, Taglioni, continues to draw good houses; but the musical part of the entertainments at this Theatre, is almost beneath criticism.

London, February 17th.

The fashionable people are now moving rapidly up to town, which, however, is by no means so full as it usually is at this season; the clubs, indeed, are much frequented, and they seem to increase in number with the decline of splendour in large families. At the Athenæum the applications for admission are beyond belief; and the same may almost be said of every other club; even the Literary Union, which is but of recent date, has now nearly seven hundred members.

In the theatrical circles, the chief topic of conversation is the divorce of Miss Love from her husband, Captain Calcraft; it is generally thought that Lord Harborough will marry her. This, however, must be a mistake, as no action has been brought in the lower courts for crim. con. Mr. Calcraft merely gets a divorce a mensâ et thoro; to enable the parties to marry again, a divorce, a vinculo matrimonii must be obtained, by means of a bill before the Houses of Parliament, founded upon the action in the lower court.

The newspapers have all been in error, in stating that Captain Dillon, who discovered the fate of La Perouse, has been engaged by the

\* Paganini was condemned to the galleys, but not for murder, and it was whilst he remained in "durance vile," that he composed those splendid concertos for the fourth string, as his violin happened then unfortunately to possess but one, and he was unable to supply the deficiency. Ed.

French government to make another voyage of discovery, connected with the same event. I have the authority of Captain Dillon for stating, that his intended voyage will be of a very different nature; his object is, however, for the present a secret.

The only publications of interest during the last week, have been Caillié's *Timbuctoo*, vol. 1; and the *Memoirs of the Countess du Barri*, mistress of Louis 15th, vol. 1. Some letters from Paris state, that doubts are entertained of the authenticity of Caillié's relation. With respect to the memoirs of the Countess du Barri I have only to observe, that it is an autobiography full of anecdote, and highly interesting to all who can feel an interest in the memoirs of a profligate woman, and a description of the vices and intrigues of a court. Madame du Barri's memoirs, if generally read, would do more to bring royalty into contempt, than the united efforts of all the liberals and radicals of every country.

#### THE DRAMA.

Otway's *Tragedy of Venice Preserved*, was performed at our Theatre on Monday evening, in which Miss Smithson appeared as Belvidera. So much extravagant praise has been lavished on this lady by the French critics, for her performances on the Continent, that one would have been led to imagine some new luminary had appeared in the theatrical firmament, which would eclipse the glories of Siddons and O'Neill, who so long shone with such brilliancy in our hemisphere. Though, from former recollections of Miss Smithson, we were never inclined to give credence to those inflated panegyrics of our Parisian neighbours, yet we must admit that on Monday evening, she exhibited evidences of great improvement, and many characteristics, which entitle her to assume, if not the highest, at least, a leading rank in tragic representation. Her enunciation is distinct, and her action truly graceful, united to a dignified deportment, and a countenance capable of much, and varied expression. In the earlier scenes of the play, we were not so much interested, but in the last act she developed powers of a superior order; we would, however, consider her acting much more true to nature, were it divested of some of the mannerism of the French school, in which she appears to have been studying. Mr. Calcraft will excuse us when we say he is not adapted for such parts as *Pierre*; in his peculiar line, no one can please us more, nor does he in any thing absolutely offend, but his *forte* does not lie in the higher walk of tragedy. Mr. Cooke evinced much discrimination and judgment in his delineation of the querulous and uxorious *Juffier*—but he lacks physical energy, and what is termed, "a good stage face," which are essential requisites in an actor of his pretensions.

Of the minor characters in the play we shall not now speak, as we intend, in a future number, to advert more particularly to this neglected department of the Theatre.

Mr. Dowton appeared, on Saturday night, in Lord Glengall's comedy; and Mr. Horn in Masaniello: the house was but indifferent. Mr. Horn gave the songs with his usual sweetness, neat execution, good taste, and just expression—but his voice is incapable of producing those effects of *piano* and *forte*, in which so much of the power of Braham consists, and without which, no public singer, whatever may

be his other qualifications, can take any but a second rate station in the ranks of dramatic fame. This inferiority of power in Mr. Horn, as compared with that of the great vocalist we have named, is particularly observable in the last scene of *Masaniello*, in which the beautiful arias, "the Barcarole," and "my Sister Dear," are repeated with such happy effect. It is, probably, in the recollection of the reader, what a touching pathos Mr. Braham communicated to these melodies, chiefly, if not altogether, by the subdued tone in which he gave them the second time, compared with that with which he had delighted his hearers an hour earlier in the same strains. In the first, there was the energy of an heroic character in the vigour of manhood, and under the influence of strong excitement: but in the repetition, the expression was that of a man on whom the hand of death was pressing heavily, and who was roused with difficulty, to an indistinct sense of the persons and events by which he was surrounded. This repetition, which is not a mere copy, like a duplicate impression of the same print, but rather like an *offrack*, faint, and powerless, yet preserving, with minute fidelity, every line of the original, is at once the most beautiful, as well as original idea of the piece. Yet it was in this that Mr. Horn was most strikingly ineffective; conscious of the inability of his voice to fill the house, he was afraid to decrease its power, and gave the songs with the same vigour as before, there was consequently no contrast, no perceptible diminution of force, no delicate gradation of the lights and shades, as in a picture placed in a dim light—nothing, in short, to affect the feelings, by a pathetic expression of the altered circumstances in which the character was placed before us.—In this, therefore, we think Mr. Horn erred—as the contrast should, at all events, have been marked; and as he had not the power to give greater energy to the songs in the first instance, he should, at least, have given them less in the second; and though, by doing so, he might probably have pleased the thoughtless and injudicious less, who estimate the goodness of the music by the greatness of the noise, he would certainly have satisfied the skilful and reflecting part of his hearers more. We offer these remarks to Mr. Horn in a kind spirit; his defects are generally those for which he is not accountable—those resulting from a vocal organ of inferior and uncertain power, but he rarely sins against good taste, and just musical expression—far more rarely, indeed, than the great vocalist, with whom we have, in the present instance, compared him.

In the same spirit, we shall offer one or two observations to Miss Byfield. This lady has considerable powers, and appears to us to improve, but she has also great defects, and much to learn before she can become a really fine singer. The greatest of these is her eternal effort to sing loud, a fault of the worst character in a woman's singing, and one to which unfortunately, they seem wonderfully prone. Shakspeare says, or at least makes Lear say, that a voice ever soft, gentle and low, is an excellent thing in woman—and so it is, and we have often wished that our second rate female vocalists were of the same opinion, when they were distracting our ears with their discordant screams. With Miss Byfield there is no piano, no *diminuendo*, and no true *crescendo*, because there is no contrast. It is therefore mere gallery singing, without impassioned expression,

without pathos, and without beauty. Has this lady never heard the divine Pasta? Miss Byfield must also learn to articulate her words, which she might easily do by straining her voice less; and finally, she should shake less, or rather not at all, until she knows how, for at present it is not properly a shake, it is only a cackle, or break on the one note. If Miss Byfield will attend to these hints, she may become an excellent, though perhaps not a first rate vocalist, and we shall rejoice at her success.

At Covent-Garden, Bishop's adaptation of *La Gazza Ladra*, aided by the powerful talents of Miss Paton, has become highly attractive. At the rival house, a Piece, translated from the French by Planché, called the "National Guard," has also proved profitable to the treasury of Mr. Price.

It appears from the authorized accounts published in the French journals, that at the thirteen theatres which Paris contains, one hundred and seventy-five new Pieces were produced during the year 1829, of which the *Vaudeville*, or Ballad Opera, furnished the greater proportion.

### MUSIC.

On Monday evening last, the Anacreontic Society treated their friends with their first private Concert for the Season, at the Rotunda. The Room displayed a galaxy of beauty and of fashion, such as we have seldom seen assembled on a similar occasion. The Orchestra was led by Mr. Alday, with his usual ability, and presented all the Amateur talent of which this city boasts. The Concert commenced with a grand Symphony of Beethoven's, which was, indeed, finely performed. The stringed instruments were most effective on the occasion; and of this our readers may judge, when we inform them that amongst those presiding were Messrs. Alday, Barton, Pigott, Fallon, and two of the Herrmans.

Mr. Latham was particularly happy in the *Aria*, "Sei Morelli," by Cimaroso; and a Divertissement for the Violinello, consisting of airs from *La Dame Blanche*, by Mr. Pigott, was warmly applauded. Nothing could be finer than his execution of "Robin Adair;" it was full of taste and feeling, and remarkable for that ease and brilliancy of execution, as well as mellowness of tone, for which Mr. Pigott is so deservedly distinguished in his performance on this instrument.

Mr. James Barton captivated all present, by his admirable performance of a Solo, arranged for the Violin by *De Beriot*, and which, we do not hesitate to say, was the principal feature in the entertainment of the night—his execution of the more rapid passages displayed at once a celerity and precision truly wonderful, and where pathos was required, he was exquisite, in fact Mr. Barton left us nothing to wish for, but that his talents were employed in a more extended and profitable sphere.

The concert concluded with Haydn's Grand Chorus, "The Heavens are telling," the effect of which was truly sublime. We have now to close this notice with congratulating our fellow citizens, on the possession of so much native talent as we saw collected on this occasion, and on the existence of a society so eminently calculated to cultivate and advance musical science in this country.

The Messrs. Herrman gave their first concert since their return to this city, on the 11th

instant. The auditory assembled on the occasion was highly fashionable, and we noticed a number of amateurs in the room; the selection of music consisted entirely of the works of foreign composers, with the exception of the *Venite Adoremus* of Webbe, which was first introduced instrumentally, and by a sudden and pleasing transition changed to a vocal quartette, in which harmony was combined with masterly effect, we were also particularly struck with an *Adagio* and *Waltz*, for four voices by *Beethoven*, and a vocal Overture, by *Zwing*, of a novel and fantastic character.—Messrs. Zeugheer and Lidel Herrmann, the former on the Violin, and the latter on the Violoncello, delighted their audience by the performance of two beautiful concertos, the production of Mayseder and Romberg, in which they displayed a highly finished style, and wonderful facility of execution. On the whole the Messrs. Herrmann are a most talented family, and well worthy the support of every lover of music.

### ORIGINAL POETRY.

We have been again favoured with another Poem from the same source from which we gave the beautiful lines "To Elodie," in our last; and we have the expectation of being, from time to time, the means of rescuing from oblivion all that remains of one of the most highly-gifted men, whom we have ever known. He is now "passed into the skies," and beyond our flattery or our praise. But he shall live in his verses, and his fellow-countrymen shall know how much talent has been lost to them for ever, for want of a protector!

Spirit of Music! who dost sit  
At rise of sun, 'mid roscate bowers,  
Or 't'night, when evening shadows fit,  
O'er beds of sweetest flowers:  
But lovest best the waching hour  
When glancing moonbeams play  
On forest dark, and ruin'd tower—  
When, as if subject to thy sway,  
Their silver light illumines the sea,  
And wakes the tides to harmony!

Oh! at that hour, in land afar,  
How oft is heard the soft guitar,  
Which wakes the heart to love:  
How often on the ravish'd ear,  
The even-song of Gondolier,  
Bursts as from heaven above!

Oh gentle spirit, o'er the whole  
Of Nature's works is breath'd thy soul:  
Thy voice is heard in dashing fountains,  
In vallies green—on heathy mountains;  
And when the thunders roll,  
The lightning's flash displays thy form,  
Flooding in beauty 'mid the storm!  
And should not nature bow to thee,  
Sister of Love and Poesy?

When even the angelic choirs,  
With saintly rapture strike their lyres,  
To praise the Deity!

O music, at thy magic call,  
The human passions rise and fall:  
'Tis thine to soothe the breast—  
Thou biddest care and grief be still,  
Obedient to thy sovereign will,  
They quickly sink to rest.

Then Music, be with roses crown'd—  
With laurel wreaths thy temples bound,  
Which justly thou may'st wear;  
Say where shalt thou be found?  
Alas! thou art too bright—too fair,  
Too much a spirit of the air,  
For earthly offerings:  
And yet is not thy form display'd  
In all its native charms array'd,  
When . . . . . sings!

Then let us wreath, of roses fair,  
Chaplets for her flowing hair:  
A double wreath to her is due,  
Both Music's crown, and Beauty's too.